

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

The following message, transmitted through Mr. E. R. McLean, private secretary, was received from his excellency the Governor:

Executive Office,
April 24, 1897.

To the House of Representatives:

House bill No. 281 is herewith returned without approval. It is an act which seeks to repeal article 2923 of the Revised Statutes, providing that the Commissioner of Agriculture shall plan and arrange for collecting and publishing agricultural and farm statistics, and for this purpose shall, on or before January 1 of each year, furnish the assessors with the necessary blanks for procuring data relating to agriculture, horticulture and stock raising. The Department of Agriculture is the only one in the State government specially designed to benefit the farmers, who constitute a large majority of our population, and the statute sought to be repealed is necessary to its successful operation. Unquestionably such a department, clothed with adequate powers, provided with necessary means, and intelligently and vigorously administered, would be of great benefit to those engaged in agriculture as well as furnish to people of other States seeking homes extensive information of the products and possibilities of the State. It is not a justification of the repeal of the statute that in times past, because of inadequate legislation, statistics have been tardily procured and published. The farmers are entitled to a fair test of the system, and instead of repealing the most important provision of the law and seriously crippling the department, in my judgment the laws relating thereto should be amended and perfected, so that the data may be speedily obtained and published.

C. A. CULBERSON.